

A
SERMON

John O F Pulley 6
ASSVRANCE.

Fourteene yeares agoe Preached
in CAMBRIDGE, since in
other Places.

Now by the importunity of Friends
exposed to publike view.

By THOMAS FULLER B. D. late Lecturer
in *Lombard Street*.



LONDON,

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TO THE
HONOURABLE,

and nobly accomplished Knight,

Sir JOHN DANVERS, all

*the blessings of this, and a
better life.*

SIR,



See read how *Zachariah*
being struck dumbe, cal-
led for Table-bookes
thereon to write his
minde, making his hands to sup-
ply the defect of his mouth : It
hath been the pleasure of the pre-
sent Authority (to whose com-

I.

A 2

mands

The Epistle Dedicatory.

mands I humbly submit) to make me mute, forbidding mee till further order the exercise of my publicke Preaching, wherefore I am faine to imploy my fingers in writing, to make the best signes I can, thereby to expresse, as my desire to the generall good, so my particular gratitude to your Honour.

2. May this Treatise but finde the same favour from your *Eie*, as once it did from your *Eare*, and be aswell accepted when read, as formerly when heard. And let this humble Dedication be interpreted a weake acknowledgement of those strong obligations your bounty hath laid upon me. Well may you taste the fruits of that tree, whose root your liberality hath preserved from whithering.

Sir,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Sir, these hard times have 3.
taught mee the Art of frugality,
to improve every thing to the best
advantage ; by the same rules of
thrift , this my Dedication as re-
turning thanks for your former
favours, so begs the continuance
of the same. And to end, as I began,
with the example of *Zachariah*, as
his dumbnesse was but temporary ;
so I hope by Gods goodnesse, and
the favour of my friends, amongst
whom your Honour stands in
the highest ranke, the miracle may
be wrought, that the dumbe may
speake again, and as well by words
publikely professe, as now by his
hand, he subscribes himselfe,

Your Servant in all

Christian office.

THOMAS FULLER.

THE
HISTORY
OF
THE
CITY
OF
BOSTON
FROM
1630
TO
1800
BY
JOHN
B. HENNING

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1800



TO
THE CHRISTIAN
READER.

I Shall be short in my addresses unto thee ; not onely, because I know not thy disposition, being a stranger unto thee ; but chiefly, because I am ignorant of my owne present Condition, remaining as yet, a stranger to my selfe. Were I restored to the free use of my Function, I would then request, the concurrence of thy thanks with mine, to a gracious God the giver, and honourable Persons the dealers of this great favour unto me. Were I finally interdicted my Calling, without hope of recoverie, I would bespeake thy pittie to bemoane my estate. But lying as yet in the Marshes betweene Hope and Feare, I am no fit subject to be condoled for, or congratulated with.

Yet it is, I trust, no piece of Popery to maintaine ; that the prayers of others may be beneficiall, and available for a person in my Purgatorie condition. Which moves me to crave thy Christian suffrages, that I may be ridde out of my present torment, on such tearmes as may most tend to Gods glory, mine owne good, and the edification of others. However matters shall succede, it is no small comfort to my Conscience, that in respect of my Ministeriall

To the Christian Reader.

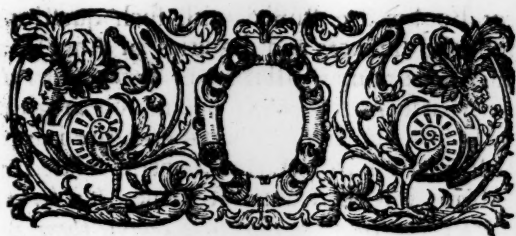
riall Function, I doe not die Felo de se; not stabbing my Profession by mine own laxi nesse, who hitherto have, and hereafter shall improve my utmost endeavours, by any lawfull meanes to procure my restitution.

When the Priests would have carried the Arke after David, David forbad them to goe further, If (said hee) I shall finde favour in the eyes of the Lord, hee will bring mee againe, and shew mee both it, and his habitation. But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee: behold here am I, let him doe to me, as seemeth good unto him: Some perchance would perswade me, to have the Pulpit carried after me, along with me to my private Lodgings, but hitherto I have refrained from such exercises, as subject to offence, hoping in due time to bee brought backe to the Pulpit, and endeavouring to compose my selfe to Davids resolution. And if I should bee totally forbidden my Function, this is my confidence, that, That great pasture of Gods Providence, whereon so many of my Profession doe dayly feede, is not yet made so bare by their biting, but that, besides them and Millions more, it may still comfortably maintaine,

Thy Friend and servant

in Christ Jesus.

THOMAS FULLER.



A
SERMON
OF
ASSVRANCE.

2 PETER I. 10.

*Give rather diligence to make your
calling and election sure.*

MAns life may not unfitly be compared to a Candle. Curiosity may well be resembled to the *Thiefe* in the Candle, which makes men to spend much pretious time in needlesse disputes, the conclusions whereof are
P. B. 35.

A.

both uncertaine and unprofitable. The *School-mens* Bookes are stuffed with such questions, about the distances and dignities of Angels, as if men were to marshall them in *Rank* and *File*, how that heavenly *Hoste* doe march in glory one before another. When men heare improbable matters from farre Countries related unto them, it is their usuall Returne, *It is better to beleeve them, then goe thither to confute them.* But let us not credit many unlikely-hoods concerning Angels, which the boldnesse of School-men have obruded upon us, but rather labour in Gods due time, to goe to heaven, there with our owne happy experience to confute them.

II.

Well it is said of *Socrates*, that he was the first of the *Grecians*, which humbled speculative into morall Philosophy. How well would the paines of that Minister be employed, who should endeavour to bring downe and abate many superfluous contemplative Queries into practicall *Divinity*. It were liberty enough if the *Sermons* of all Preachers were bound to keepe Residence onely on such subjects, which all Christians are bound to beleeve, and practice for their soules health; Amongst which the Doctrine in my Text, may justly challenge a principall part. When *Naomie* heard but the mention of the name of *Boaz*, the *Man*, said

* *Ruth. 2. 20.* * *hee, is neere unto us, and of our affinity;* So no sooner doe you heare this Text read unto you, *Give rather diligence to make your calling and election sure;* but every well affected heart is ready,

ready to claime blood and challenge right therein. Questions about Angels are neither *kiffe nor kinne* to my soule; but this a precept of that consequence, of that concernment, we all ought to share a part and interest in the speedy and reall practice thereof.

Some difference there is betwixt us, and the *Romanists*, in reading the Text who following the vulgar Latine, adde *per bona opera*; make your calling and election sure by good workes. A clause altogether omitted in our English Translations, because in the Greeke nothing appears answerable thereunto. Good reason therefore, that we should correct the transcript by the Originall, and purifie the streame to the clearenesse of the fountaine. God grant, that though on these just grounds we exclude good works, out of the Text, wee may admit, embrace, and practice them in our lives and conversations.

III.

My Text may not unfitly bee compared to *Ehuds* dagger, short, but sharpe. And although now it be falne into a lame hand, (the unworthynesse of the Preacher in this place) to manage it, yet inforced with the assistance of Gods arme, it may prove able to give the deadly blow, to foure *Eglon* sinnes, tyrannizing in too many mens hearts.

IIII.

1. *Supine negligence in matters of Salvation.*
2. *Busie meddling in other mens matters.*
3. *Preposterous curiosity in unsearchable mysteries.*

4. *Continuall wavering, or Scepticalness concerning our Calling and Election.*

1. *Supine negligence* is dispatched in that word, *Give diligence*. This grace of Assurance is unattainable by ease and idleness.

2. *Busy meddling* in other mens matters is destroyed in the Particle *Your*. Each one ought principally to intend his owne assurance.

3. *Preposterous curiosity* is stabbed with the order of the words, *Calling and Election*, not *Election and Calling*. Men must first begin to assure their *Calling*, and then *ascendendo*, argue and inferre the assurance of their *Election*.

4. *Continuall wavering* is wounded under the fifth ribbe, in the conclusion of my Text, *Sure*. Wee will but touch at three first, and land at the last, as the chiefe subject of our ensuing Discourse.

V. This *Grace of Assurance* is not attainable with ease and idleness. Christianity is a laborious Profession. Observe Gods servants cleane through the Scripture, resembled to men of painefull vocations: To *Racers*, who must stretch every sinew to get first to the Goale: to *Wrestlers*, a troublesome employment; so that I am unresolved whether to recount it amongst *Toiles*, or *Exercises*, (at the best it is but a toilesome Exercise.) To *Souldiers*, who are in constant *Service* and *dayly Duty*, alwaies on the *Guard* against their *Enemies*. Besides, we *Ministers* are compared to *Shepherds*, a painefull and dangerous profession amongst the *Jewes*; to
Watch-

Watchmen, which continually wake for the good of others: so that besides the difficulties of our Christian calling, we are incumbred with others, which attend our Ministeriall function. Let none therefore conceit, that Salvation with the Graces accompanying it (whereof this *Assurance* we treat of is a Principall) is to be compassed with facility, without constant care and endeavour to obtaine it. How easily was the man in the Gospell let downe to our Saviour in the house, whilst foure men for him uncovering the rooſe thereof, let him downe with cords lying quietly on his couch? Some may suppose that with as little hardship they may bee lifted up to heaven, and that whilst they lazily lye snorting on their beds of security, (never mortifying their lusts, never striving for grace, never struggling against their corruptions) they shall bee drawne up to happinesse, or it let down to them, merely by the cords of Gods mercy, and Christs merits. Such men without amendment will one day finde themselves dangerously deceived, and that it is a laborious taske, to gaine either the ſurenesse, or assurance of salvation, wherein, according to the Apostles prescription, *wee must give diligence.*

To make your [Each Christian is principally to endeavour the Assurance of his owne Calling and Election.] Indeed it were to be wished, that Parents, besides themselves, were assured of the true sanctity (so by consequence of their Calling and Election) of themselves multipli-

VII.

ed the children God hath given them, of the second part of their selves lying in their bosome, their wives, of true grace in their friends and family. How comfortable were it, if Ministers were ascertained of true grace and pietie in the breasts and bosomes of the people committed to their charge. But the best way to passe a rationall verdict, on the sincerity of sanctity in another, is first to finde an experimentall Evidence thereof in ones own heart. A Philosopher complained, that it was an exceeding hard thing to finde a wise man; true, said another, *for he must bee a wise man that seekes him, and knowes when he hath found him*; and hence ariseth the difficulty, because two wise men in effect must meet together, the *Seeker*, and the *Finder*. It is a hard thing in like manner to be assured of unfained faith, and undissembled Devotion in another mans heart. Because first, that party must have a feeling of the operation of grace in his owne soule (otherwise blinde men are incompetent Judges of colours) before he can make his presumptions of holiness in another, from those sacred symptoms and fruits of piety, which he findes in his owne Conscience. Let it therefore be every mans maine worke, first to make a scrutiny in his owne soule, to make his own *Calling* and *Election* sure.

VII.

How contrary is this to the common practice of most in the world? It is a tale of the wandering Jew, but it is too much truth of too many

many wandring Christians: whose home is alwaies to bee abroad, Professours in spirituall Palmestry, who will undertake to read the *Life-line*, the line of eternall life in the hands of mens soules, though for all their skill, they often mistake the hands of *Esau* for the hands of *Jacob*, approving many hypocrites for their holinesse and condemning sincere soules for counterfeits and dissemblers.

Calling and Election [men are not to lanch into the Depths of Predestination at the first dash, but first soberly to begin with their *Calling* or *Vocation*.] Surely the very Angels which climbed up the ladder in *Jacobs* * dreame did first begin at the last and lowest * Gen. 28. 12. Round. First looke to finde thy justification, and sanctification, then thy adoption and vocation, lastly thy election and predestination. But alas, as the *Hebrews* read their letters backward: so it is to be feared that too many preposterously invert the order of my Text, and instead of *Calling* and *Election*, read *Election* and *Calling*, first grasping at those mysticks (both in their practise and discourse) which are above their reach, as if their soules feared to be runne a-ground, if sailing in the shallows of Faith and good workes, they never count themselves safe, but when adventuring in those secrets wherein they can finde no bottom.

VIII.

We are now come to the youngest part in the Text, to which we intend a *Benjamin's* portion. Being to discourse of the certainty of

IX.

of *calling* and *election*, not in respect of God's predestination, it being from all Eternity sure in him, * *from the beginning of the world God knoweth all his workes*, but in reference to man's apprehension, concerning the assurance thereof. And now least our discourse like * *For-dan* in the first *moneth* should over-flow, wee will raise these Bankes to bridle it, and consider;

* Act; 15. 8.

* 1 Chro: 12.

15.

1. That assurance of *Calling* and *Election* is feasible in this life to be attain'd.
2. What this assurance is.
3. How a Christian buckleth and applyeth it to his soule?
4. Wee will satisfie some doubts and difficulties in this behalfe.
5. Wee will conclude with comfortable uses to all sorts of Christians.

X.

Of the first. That assurance of ones *Calling* and *Election* may, without any miraculous revelation, be in this life acquired, appeareth plaine in the Text; because the *Apostle* in the simplicity of the *Dove-like* Spirit exhort's us to the *training* thereof. Now surely it had been no better than *holy fraud*, (which heaven hath a *Pillorie* to punish) to put men upon a *labour in vaine*, to seeke that which is not to be found. Thinke not therefore that the assurance of *Calling* and *Election* is like the Philosophers *stone*, which so many have searched for, yet all have lost their estates, before they could find it out; but no doubt by God's blessing

bleffing it is in this world attainable. And yet the *Papists* maintaine, that whilest wee live in this world, and faile in our desires and affections to the rich *Indies* of Heaven and happinesse, no further Land is discoverable beyond the *Cape of good hope*, and that it is arrogancy and presumption (without an immediate expresse by revelation from Heaven) for any to conceive himself assured of his salvation.

For the second, this assurance of ones *Calling* and *Election* is a [separable] fruit or effect, not of every true, but only of some strong Faiths, whereby the party is perswaded, of the certainty of his *Calling* and *Election*. I say separable, to manifest my dissenting from such worthy Divines, who make this Assurance to bee the very Being, Essence, Life, Soule, and Formality of Faith itself. Whence these two Opinions as false, as dangerous, must of necessity bee inferred. First, that every one who hath true faith, and are eternally to bee saved, have alwaies some measure of this Assurance : Secondly, that such, who are devoid of this Assurance, are likewise deprived of all sincere faith for the present. But God forbid any Preacher should deliver Doctrines so destructive to Christian comfort on the one side, and advantagious to spirituall Pride on the other. Such will prove *Carnifcine*, the racks and tortures of tender Consciences. And as the * carelesse Mother kill'd her little childe, for she overlaid it ; so the weight of this heavie Doctrin, would presse many poore, but pious soules ; ma-

XI.

* 1 King. 3.

ny faint, but feeble infant-faiths to the pit of Despaire, exacting and extorting from them more than God requires, that every Faith should have assurance with it, or else be uneffectuall to salvation. No, the formality of Faith, consists in mans renouncing and disclaiming all sufficiencie in himselfe, casting, rolling, and relying his soule totally and entirely on the mercies of God, and merits of Christ, though not assured sometimes of the certainty of his salvation. Like a man in a tempest cast out of the ship, and lying on a planke or board, placeth all his humane hopes on that planke or board, thereby to escape drowning, though he have no certainty, that the same shall bring him safe to the shore.

XII.

As for those reverend Divines who have written and maintained the contrary, that Assurance is the very soule of faith, and faith dead and uselesse without it; far be it from me, because dissenting from their opinions, to raile on their Persons, and wound the memories of those which are dead with opprobrious termes; rather let us thank God for their learned and religious writings left behinde them, knowing, that the head of the knowledge of this Age, stands on the shoulders of the former, and their very errors have advantaged us into a clearer discovery of the truth in this particular.

In the next place, a Christian thus collecteth this *Assurance* of his *Calling and Election*, by composing this practicall *Syllogisme* in his soule.

The

The Major.

*He that truly repenteth himselfe of his sinnes,
and relyeth with a true faith on God in Christ,
is surely Called, and by consequence Elected
before all Eternity to be a vessell of honour.*

The Minor.

*But I truly repent my selfe of my sinnes, and
rely with a true faith on God in Christ.*

The Conclusion.

Therefore I am truly Called and Elected, &c.

The Major is the sense of the Scripture in severall places, the very effect of Gods promises, and the generall scope of the Gospell: so that if Satan should be so impudent, as to deny the truth of this Proposition, he may be beaten with that weapon, whereat once he challenged our Saviour, *it is written.*

All the difficulty is in the *Minor*. Happy that man, blessed that woman, who without self-delusion, without flattering their owne soules, can seriously make this Assumption, *But I, &c.* For such I dare be bold to make the Conclusion, yea it makes it selfe for them, without my Assistance. But alas! many out of fearefulnesse dare not make this *Minor*, conceiving this Assumption to bee presumption in them. And although, they might truly doe it (being in a better condition then they conceive themselves) yet overwhelmed with the sense of their sinnes and Gods severity, they assume the contrary, and poore soules, often

XIII.

apprehend and conclude their owne damnation in their wounded consciences : whereas others with a more dangerous mistake of common illuminations, for discriminating grace, falsely make the *Minor*, and causelessly inferre, their blessed condition, without just ground for the same. Such few as goe rightly to worke doe produce these three witnesses, to assert the truth of this *Minor* proposition.

XIV.

First, the testimony of their Conscience, that A surney General to the King of heaven, whose Yea or Nay, ought to bee more with us then all the Oathes in the world beside. One knoweth whom it is that he loveth, and whom he loveth not, whom it is he trusteth, and whom he trusteth not, and in like manner his Conscience tells him, whether he doth, or doth not truly repent, whether seemingly, or sincerely he casteth himselfe on God in Christ.

XV.

* Rom. 8. 16.

Secondly, the witness of the holy Spirit in their hearts, ** which beareth witness with their Spirit, that they are the children of God.* Now wee must with sorrow confesse, that this doctrine of the Spirit dwelling in the heart of Gods servants is much discountenanced of late, and the Devill thereupon hath improved his owne interest. To speake plainly, it is not the fierceness of the Lion, nor the fraud of the Fox, but the mimicalness of the Ape, which in our Age hath discredited the undoubted Truth. But what if the Apes in *India* finding a glow-worme, mistooke it to be true fire, and heaping much combustible mat-

ter about it, hoped by their blowing of it, thence to kindle a flame; I say, what if that Animal *τελωτόπιον*, that *Mirth-making creature*, deceived it selfe, doth it thence follow that there is no true fire at all? And what if some Phanaticall Anabaptists, by usurpation have intitled their brainedicke fancies, to be so many illuminations of the spirit, must we presently turne * *Sadduces* in this point, and deny that there is any spirit at all? God forbid. We confesse the Apostles in the Primitive Church were our elder bretheren, and wi h *Isaac* carried away the inheritance of the spirit in so great a proportion, as to be enabled thereby to miraculous operations; Yet so, that wee, (though the yonger bretheren) the sonnes of *Keturah*, have rich and precious gifts of the spirit bestowed upon us, which at sometime or other, in a higher or lower degree sweetly move the soule of all Gods servants, and in many of them; testifie the truth of that *Minor Proposition*, namely the sincerity of their faith and repentance.

* Acts 23.8.

The third and last witness we will insist on, is that comfort and contentment, the Conscience of the party takes in doing good works, and bringing forth the fruits of new obedience. That though hee knowes his best good works are stained with corruptions and many imperfections, yet because they are the end of his vocation, and the Justifiers of his Faith; because thereby the Gospell is graced, wicked men amazed, some of them converted, the rest confounded, weak Christians confirmed, the poore relieved, Devils

XVI.

rejoicing at them, Angels rejoycing for them, God himselfe glorified by them, I say, because of these and other reasons, he doth good deeds with humility and cheerefulnesse, and findeth a singular joy in his soule resulting from the doing thereof. This joy is an excellent witnessse to depose the truth of his Faith and repentance, and to confirme the *Minor* in the former Syllogisme.

XVII.

See here though good works on just ground were excluded our Text, yet in due time and their proper places wee have entertained them in our sermon. If good workes offer to crowd into our justification, let us be so bold as to shut the doore against them. But if wee have any to come into our sanctification, thereby also to averre and attest the truth of our Faith and Repentance; let us say to them as *Laban to Jacob*, *why stand yee without come in yee blessed of the Lord*. And this joy conceived from the good workes men doe, is the more pure the more private, the more sincere, the more secretly it is carried. I shall ever commend the modesty of *Elisabeth*: who after long barrennesse finding her self with child did not publish her happinesse to the view of the world, but hid her self three moneths. If after too long sterility in goodnesse, thou perceivest thy self at last by God's grace pregnant in pious workes, vent not thy good successe in the Market-place, doe not boast and bragge thereof in discourse to others, but bee contented to enjoy the solid comfort thereof betwixt God and thy owne conscience.

So

Soe much for the three witnesses to confirme X VIII.
the truth of the *Minor*. All that I shall adde is
this, let us who are or should bee scholars take
heed, whom our parents or friends have bred
at the Fountaines of Learning and Religion,
till our portions are almost shrunke into our E-
ducation. Let us take heed, least silly simple
people, who never read *Aristotle's Organon*,
never knew how to mould Argument in mood-
and figure, make this Syllogisme true in their
hearts, by their *supernaturall Logicke*; whilest we,
with all our wit and un sanctified learning, make
at the best but a Solœcisme, and thereby put a
dangerous fallacy upon our owne soules.

But heere wee must propound and answer XIX.
some objections, the resolution whereof may
tend both to our instruction and comfort; The *Object*.
first is this, whether all the servants of God now
living, and in the state of grace, are for the pre-
sent assured of their *Calling* and *Election*; So
that if instantly arrested to pay their *debt* to na-
ture, they are as confident of their souls moun-
ting up to heaven and happinesse, as of their
bodies falling downe to dust and corruption.

Wee divide the congregation of God's ser-
vants now surviving into rankes; First * *Mna-* XX.
sons old disciples, seniou professors of piety. *Answ.*
* *Hannah's* which have lived many yeares in the * *Acts*.
Temple, *serving God with Fasting and Prayers* * *Luke 2. 37.*
night and day. These by frequent acts, have
contracted a habit of Piety, Grace by custome
is made another nature unto them, especially
towards.

towards the latter end of their liues ; partly because their soules do steale a Glymps, Glance, or *Pisgah*-light of heaven, through the Clefts and Chinkes of their Age, or sicknesse-broken-bodies ; and partly because, as all motion is swiftest the neereft it comes to the Center: So they, the neerer they draw by death to heaven, God's Spirit and all goodnesse groweth more quick and active in them. Of these wee say that it is often observed, God deales so graciously with them, as to crowne their endeavors with an assurance of salvation. To such I may adde those whom I may call *young-old-Christians*, whose profession of Christ, though short, hath beene thick, though young in yeares, yet they have not onely done, but suffered for Christ. Religion hath cost them deare, they have not onely been summered but wintered in piety, have not onely passed prosperity, but have been acquainted with adversity therein. Great travelers in Christianity, which have *cut the line*, and have passed the Torrid Zone of Persecution, and which is more, of a *wounded conscience*. These also God may admit into the former forme, and out of his undeserved mercy reward them with the Assurance of their salvation.

XXI.

But all starres which shine in heaven are not of the first greannesse, neither are all of *David's* worthies to bee equalled with the first three. Other Christians there are (who in God's due time may mate the former both in grace and glory) Punies in piety, Novices in Religion:

on : Of such, I say, not one of a hundred (whatsoever they may erroneously pretend to the contrary) are assured of their *Calling* and *Election*.

If further it be demanded, whether every XXII.
Saint of God belonging to Election, hath not at one time or other in his life or at his death, this assurance conveyed into his soule, I must confesse that heerein, the streames of learned mens judgements, runne not onely in different, but contrary channells. Some are of opinion that God is so gracious, and magnifies his mercy so much in his proceedings towards his servants, that the very meanest in the *Family of Faith*, have some proportion of this assurance, conferred upon them during their abode in this life. Other Divines, no whit inferiour to the former in number, Learning, Religion, and Christian experience, maintaine the opposite opinion : that God sometimes is so pleased, to try the patience, and humble the hearts of some of his servants, that a continuall feare, is a constant *covering of their eyes*, *they goe heavily all the day long*, never daring for feare of presumption, to owne and acknowledge any grace in their hearts, alwaies jealous of their owne condition, and sadly suspicious of themselves, least all their holinesse prove hypocrisie, and their Piety be more in profession then sinceritie. Those may be compared unto children in their Mothers belly, which have true life in them, and yet themselves doe not know that they live. For my owne part, I conceive this controversie

can onely bee decided betwixt God, and a mans owne Conscience : no third Person can be privie to the secret transactions betwixt them. The last of these two Opinions (so farre as one may conjecture) hath most of charity, and not the least of truth in it. I am perswaded that many a pious soule dying in the fit of a temptation, hath instantly expected to sinke from his death-bed into hell-fire, when the same by Gods goodnesse hath beene countermanded a contrary way, and sent to blisse and happinesse; Yea, it is more then probable, that many sad and afflicted spirits, have beene possessed of glory in heaven, before they durst ever owne that themselves had any true *Grace* on earth.

XXIII. The next question which comes to be resolved, is, whether this assurance once possessed, may not afterwards be forfeited. Here the controversie is not, whether once the childe of God, may relapse into the state of damnation, totally and finally losing all saving *Grace* in his heart, (which desperate Position cuts asunder the sinewes of all Gospel-comfort) but it is onely enquired into, whether the apprehension or *Assurance of his calling* may not in some cases be lost. Wherein our answer is affirmative, and this usually comes to passe on these two sad Occasions.

XXIV. First, when the Party commits some Conscience-wasting sinne, such as *Tertullian* tearmes, *Peccatum devoratorium salutis*; and continues in the same some season without repentance. indeed every surreptitious sinne, or sinne of infirmity, and especially a complication of many of them together.

ther, have a good minde to destroy this *Assurance*;
But it is seldome scene, that their strength is so
great, (though they frequently fret and dayly
nibble at the cordes of our Assurance) as to share
or grind them asunder, a thing usually done by
the committing of high and heinous offences.
There is a whirlewinde in the *West-Indies*, called
a *Herricane*, which comes but seldome, and yet
too often. For then Rasor-like it shaves downe
all leuell and flat before it, Trees, and Townes,
and Towres, in a word, it is as wild and savage
as the Natives of the Countrey. No lesse the
impetuous violence and cruelty of a Conscience-
wasting-sinne : such as *Leis* Incest, *Dauids* Adul-
tery, *Peters* deniall, when they come, they make
a depopulation of all *Graces* formerly planted in
the soule; maiming the hand of Faith, breaking
the Anchor of Hope, quenching the heate of
Charity, darkning the light of knowledge, and
totally taking away for a time, the comfortable
apprehension of Gods love to them, and their cal-
ling to God. This made *David* petition to God,
Restore to me the joy of thy salvation. Wherein three
things are implied. First, that once he did possesse
that joy, *Restore it*. Secondly, that now hee had
lost it, *Restore it*; Lastly, that the losse thereof
was not so desperate, but with hope by true for-
row, to recover this joy. *Restore to me the joy of thy
Salvation*.

The second way to lose this Assurance, is by
suffering some great affliction, above the standard
and proportion of ordinary crosses; seemingly

XXV.

of a sadder hue, and blacker complexion then what usually befall other Christians. In such a case a sorrowfull soule, is ready thus to reason with it selfe. Once I conceived my selfe in a happy condition, thinking my selfe estated in the favour of God, truely called, and by consequence truely elected to grace here, and glory hereafter. But now alas, I perceive my selfe utterly mistaken. I built my hopes on a false bottome, I am but a meere formalist, a pretender to piety, yea a reprobate and cast-away, otherwise God would never afflict me in this fashion, with such hideous and horrible crosses, dolefull tribulations, dismall temptations, so that the brimstone of hell-fire may plainly bee sented therein. Thus holy *Joh*, when God discharged whole volleys of Chaine-shot of afflictions against him, *one drew on another*, we find him sometimes venting expression, rankly favouring of despaire, and no wonder if hee began to stagger who had drunke so deeply of the bitter cuppes. And now conceiving our selves in some measure to haue satisfied the most important practicall queries wherewith this doctrine of Assurance is incumbered, we come to make some profitable application.

XXVI.

The *Gracians* had a threefold Song; the *Old men* sung, *we have bene*, the *middle-aged men* we are, the *young men*, *we shall be*. This Song will serve to divide my Auditors at this time. Some sing *we have bene*. There was a happy time wherein wee were ascertained of our *Calling* and *Election*.

Election, but now, alas! poore soules! have lost it. Others Sing *wee are* for the present in the peaceable possession of such assurance. Others sing *wee shall bee* in God's due time, when his goodness and wisdom seeth fit, such an happiness shall bee bestowed upon us.

Wee begin with the first that sing, *wee have* XXVII.
beene, O that it were in my power as well to help as to pittie you, to amend as to bemoane your condition! It is the greatest misery, that one hath once beene happy. All your Song is a *Burthen*. The best advice I can prescribe unto you is this; seriously consider with your selves which way you lost this assurance of your *Salvation* was it by committing a conscience-wasting-sinne? no Divine can commend unto you better or other Phyfick, than onely * *Remember from whence* * Revel. 2. 5.
thou art fallen, and repent and doe thy first Workes. And although it may please God in his mercy to forgive thy dayly imperfections and manifold infirmities, on thy generall repentance and quotidian prayer, *and forgive us our trespasses*, yet the most comfortable course and surest way to obtaine peace of conscience after the committing of an hainous offence, is by particular humiliation for it, without which serious sorrow, solide comfort is either never given, or not long enjoyed.

But if thou hast forfeited thy former assurance, XXVIII.
 thorough the pressure of some heavy affliction, learne and labour to rectifie thy erroneous judgement, who from the premises haply of God's

love, at the worst of his anger, hath falsely inferred a conclusion of his hatred against thee. Consider how God corrects those whom hee loves most, to the intent that all grace may be encreased and improved in them. Passing by on a night in the streets, I met a youth having a lighted linke in his hands, who was offended thereat, because it burnt so dark and dimme, and therefore the better to improve the light thereof, he beat, bruised, and battered it against the wall, that the wicke therein might be spread out, and the pitch with other combustible matter, (which before stifled the light with its over-stiffnesse) might be loosened, which presently caused the linke to blaze forth into a lighter flame. God in like manner deales with thy soul; that thou mayest shine the brighter before men, hee doth buffet and afflict thee with severall temptations, which give thee occasions to exercise thy graces which lay hid in prosperity. Such corrections will in conclusion, greatly adde to thy spirituall light and lustre. Apply these and the like consolations to thy soule, and remember what *David* saith, *heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning*. Yea but you will say, my night of sorrow, is like the nights in *Green-Land*, which last full four moneths together. A long night I must confesse, but day will dawne at the last, and last the longer for it.

XXIX.

Come we now to those that sing *wee are*, who doe not boast (that is a bad signe) but rejoyce,

joyce, that for the present they are possessed of this assurance. And is it so indeed? And doest thou not deceive thy selfe, beholding thy condition through a flattering glasse or false spectacles? Well if thou affirmest it, I dare not deny it. It were no manners nor charity in mee to give thy beliete the lie; and therefore what you say of your selves, I give credite thereunto. Onely let me stay a little and congratulate your happy estate. *Good successe have you with your honour.* God hath not dealt thus with every one, neither have all his servants so large a proportion of his favour. And now I will take the boldnesse to commend some counsell unto you. In the first place be thankfull to God for this great courtesie conferred upon thee, and know, that all heavenly gifts as they are got by Prayer, are kept, confirmed, and increased by Praises.

Secondly, take heed of insulting over such as want this assurance: upbraid not them with their sad condition. Say not unto them, I am certaine of my *Calling and Election*, Ergo, I am a Saint, a chosen vessell, eternally to bee saved; Thou lackest this certainty, therefore art a reprobate, a cast away, a fire-brand of Hell, eternally to bee damned. Is this the expression of thy gratitude to God, proudly to trample on his servants, and thy brethren? It is hard to say, whether that thy inference hath more of profanenesse, or falsehood in it. If a Favourite to a great Emperour should say, [*All that are not in as high esteeme and*
credite.]

XXX.

credit with the Emperour in my selfe, are so many Traitors. Would not this be accounted not only, a vaine-glorious expression, but injurious, both to his soveraigne and fellow-subjects? How many thousands of them, would be willing, yea desirous to adventure their lives, in a lawfull cause for their Emperours honour, who notwithstanding never had the favour, to bee personably known unto him, much lesse to be preferred by him to places of eminent trust and command. And may not many be presumed on, as cordially affected to Gods glory, which from their hearts love and honour both him and his, compleatly loyall to his heavenly Majesty, who have not as yet been advanced so high, and ingratiated so farre with him, as to receive the Assurance of their *Calling and Election?*

XXXI.

Thirdly, walke humbly before God, and know that this Assurance hath a narrow throate, and may be choaked with a small sinne, if God leave thee to thy selfe. There be two kindes of poyson, the one hot, the other cold. Hot poyson makes speedy dispatch, it sends men post to their graves; Cold poyson is not so active and operative, it kills but at distance, and if in any reasonable time it meets with a seasonable Antidote, the malignity thereof may be prevented, yea perchance without an Antidote, if falling upon a strong and sturdy constitution, may be mastered by natures own Cordiall; not finally to destroy, but onely to stupe and benumme. Presumption is hot poyson, it kills its thousands, makes quick riddance of mens
soules

soules to damnation. Despaire, wee confesse, is poyson, and hath kill'd its thousands, but the venome thereof is more curable, as more colde and taint in the operation thereof. Take heede therefore of presumption, lest the confidence of the Assurance of thy Calling betray thee to spirituall Pride, that to Security, that to Destruction.

Here take notice that the soule of a Saint con-XX XII.

sists of sacred riddles, and holy contradictions:

Rejoyce (saith * David) before him with trembling: if * Psa. 121.

rejoying how can hee tremble, if trembling how

can hee rejoyce? Oh that is an unhappy soule

which cannot find an expedient betwixt these ex-

tremities! that cannot accommodate these seem-

ing contrarieties: Rejoycing, when hee lookes on

a gracious God, trembling, when he beholds a sin-

full selfe: Rejoycing, when looking upward on

Gods promises, trembling, when looking down-

wards on his deserts. Ever triumphing, that hee

shall be saved, and ever trembling lest he should

be damned; ever certaine that he shall stand, and

ever carefull least he should fall. *Tantus est gradus*

certitudinis, (saith Saint Augustine) *quantus est gra-*

dis sollicitudinis. He that hath much feare to of-

fend God, hath much certainty to continue in his

favour: he that feares little, hath little certainty;

and he that is altogether fearelesse, whatsoever he

proudly presumes to the contrary, hath no assu-

rance at all to persevere in Gods favour. Wee

may observe that such as have the shaking Palfie

in their heads, live to be very aged men: sure I am,

that such as have a filiall feare to incurre their hea-

venly Fathers displeasure, hold out to the last, even to that life which hath no end. The heavens themselves are said to have *Motum trepidationis*, and the best and most spirituall servants of God, constantly feeble such trembling fits in their owne souls. In a word, Assurance to persevere is a sparkle of heavenly fire, fed with the dayly tinder of feare to offend God.

XXXIII. Nor let any confidently presume on the mystrie of predestination, (which like the Lawes of the *Medes* and *Persians* cannot be repealed) thereon to sinne with indempnity, because once and ever Gods servant, and no feare finally to fall from him. For, besides other answers to quell their pride, let such seriously consider but this particular instance. God granted *Hezekiah* a Lease of his life for fifteen yeares longer, and it was impossible for him to dye till that terme was expired; so that had *Hezekiah* fed on Toades and Vipers, on the most noxious food for mans nature, he was notwithstanding immortall during the time prefixt, because Truth it selfe had promised it. However if *Hezekiah* proved carelesse in his diet, though certaine of his life, he had no assurance of his health for that season. His intemperance might draw sicknesse on him, so that hee might lose the life of his life, his liberty of walking abroad, comfort in conversing with company, pleasure in tasting his meate and drinke, to be kept constant prisoner on his bed, a languishing as bad as death it selfe. Grant in like manner, that Predestination priviledgeth thee from sinall Apostacie, yet if

carelesse

carelesse to keepe Gods Commandements, thou maist forfeit all thy spirituall comfort, the joy of thy Salvation, have a hell on earth in thy Conscience, having in thy apprehension all the beames of Gods favour ecclipsed, one glimpse thereof a servant of God prizeth above millions of worlds.

We come now to these that sing, *We shall be.* It is (say they) not onely vaine but wicked to seeke to better our conditions by telling a lie. Wee should wrong God and our owne consciences to affirme that for the present this Assurance is conferred upon us, but are not in despaire in due time from Gods mercy to receive it. Some counsels I have to recommend unto them. XX XIV.

First doe not envie and repine at their happines, to whom this favour is already confirmed, but because God hath lov'd and honour'd them so much, doe thou love and honour them the more, and doe desire and endeavour to bee added to their society. XXX V.

Secondly know to thy comfort that were it not more for Gods glory, and thy good, this Assurance had long since been bestowed upon thee. XXX VI.
And for severall reasons it is hitherto detained.

1. Perchance because as yet thou hast not fervently sued to God for it. Thy affections are gold weights, not zealously engaged in the desire thereof. Thou seemest indifferent and unconcern'd, whether thou receivest this Assurance or no. Now God sets such an estimate and valuation on this Assurance, as a grand gift, and favour of the first magnitude, that he will have it sought, and searched, and sued,

* 1 Sam. 1. 20.

and prayed, and pressed for, with holy constancy, and restless importunity before hee will grant it. *Hannah* called her sonne, * *Samuel*. For (said shee) *I have asked him of the Lord*. Every good thing, temporall, spirituall, inward, outward, every particular grace must be a *Samuel*, craved, and requested of God before the fruition thereof can be sweet to our soules, or comfortable to our Consciences. To have a favour, before we have requested it, is the ready way to lose it, before wee know the true worth and value thereof.

2. Perchance God as yet with-holds this assurance from thee, with intent to render it more acceptable when it is bestowed. Never had *Isaac* bene so welcome to *Sarah*, but because long barrenesse, and expectation, had set so sharpe an edge on her affection.

* Luke 15.

3. It may be God in his Providence foresees, should this Assurance be bestowed upon thee, thou would'st play the unthrift and ill-husband therewith: And therefore God still keeps it in his own hand, untill thou beest more wise and better able to manage and imploy it. The * *Prodigall Sonne* having received his Portion from his Father, riotously spent it amongst Harlots; the same may be suspected by thee, and therefore as carefull Parents, jealous of their sonnes thriftinesse, will not deliver unto them all their Meanes at once, but rather confine them for some yeares to a small Pension and moderate Annuity, intending to open

open their hands, and enlarge their bounty, when they see cause; God in like manner will not intrust thee with the grosse summe of thy Assurance to be paid thee all at once; but re-taille it out unto thee, by degrees more or lesse; now a scruple, now a dramme thereof. And when thou shalt give good Evidence of thy Christian prudence to husband and improve it, the remnant of this Assurance shall wholly be made over unto thee.

Thirdly, wait and attend the time of God. *O XXXVII*
carry the Lords lease (when he will be, he can bee at leisure) who in the most fittest minute and moment will confirme this long expected Assurance unto thee. Know this that all the weights and and plummets of humane importunity, cannot make the Clock of Gods Time strike a minute sooner then he hath set it. No doubt the Virgin Mary shared the greatest Interest in our Saviour according to the flesh, to obtaine a reasonable request of him, and yet could not prevaile for the working of a Miracle before his ** houre was* ** John 2.4.*
fully come. Wherefore be thou not like to *Hophni* and *Phineas* the Priests, who contrary to Gods institution, when any man offered a sacrifice, used to send a servant whilst the flesh was seething, with a ** Flesh-booke* of threeteen in his hand, ** 1 Sam. 2. 133*
 who thrusting it into the kettle, rooke or his Masters part, *whatsoever the Flesh-booke brought up;* And if any advised him to stay till the fat was burnt, according to the custome under the law; hee presently proved impatient, would have no

fodden flesh but raw, which if not instantly given him, *he would take it by force.* Now such are the ravenous appetites, and voracious stomachs of many men, that when they propound any thing to their desires, they will not stay till God hath fitted it for them; but by *hooke or by crooke*, by any sinister or indirect meanes they will compass their ends. Such will *feed on raw meat* (as if the heat of their ardent desires would roste it enough for themselves) morsels which perchance sometimes would be pleasant for the Palate to taste, but never wholesome for the stomacke to digest. These are not pleased, though having what they please, if not also when they please: Be not thou of their Diet, know such raw meat will occasion crudities in thy stomacke. Quietly attend till God hath cooked thy meat for thee; thinke not in vaine to antedate, his time is the best time. Know that generally the *Watches* of our *desires* goe too fast; and therefore to set them right, they must be set backe according to the *Sunne-dyall* of *Gods pleasure*. Wherefore without any murmuring or repining, doe thou willingly and cheerfully waite the happy time, when God shall bee pleased to bestow this Assurance upon thee.

XXXVIII.

To Conclude with the time; The Schoolemen have a distinction of a two-fold certainty of Salvation; the one *evidentia*, the other *adherentia*: the former is when one evidently and clearly apprehends Gods favour seal'd unto him by his Spirit. This hitherto thou lackest, but dost

dost diligently labour, dayly pray, and duely waite to receive it. The latter of adherence or recumbencie, all true Christians ought ever to bee possessed off, which hope for any happiness. Namely when a man casteth himselfe wholly upon Christ, clinging about him with *Jobs* resolution, *Though thou killest mee, yet will I put my trust in thee.* Till we gaine the latter, let us make much of the former, having as much safety, though not so much solace in it, and which will with as much certainty, though not so much comfort, through Gods mercy, bring our soules to heaven and happiness. *Amen.*

FINIS.
